

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**USING THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR COMBATING TERRORISM  
TO DETERMINE OBJECTIVES AND END STATES  
FOR OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM**

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## ABSTRACT

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If Iraq is the “central front in the War on Terror” and if, as Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz purports, “the single greatest threat to peace and freedom in our time is terrorism,” then one must judge American success in Iraq by how well it contributes to achieving the ultimate goal of victory in the War on Terror. Unfortunately, the debate in the government and especially inside the administration indicates that there is little agreement upon the relationship between the conflict in Iraq and the War on Terror.

This paper will examine Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in the context of the Global War on Terrorism. It will use the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (NSCT) as the capstone, which breaks down the War on Terror into four “fronts”; DEFEAT, DENY, DIMINISH and DEFEND. Using that framework, it will determine which fronts are being fought in OIF, and it will lay out the objectives and end states for each front. Finally, it will demonstrate the disconnect between the public confessed exit strategy and the objectives and end states indicated in the NSCT by looking at the probable effects on each front if the U.S. were to pull out of Iraq without a functioning democratic government.



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## USING THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR COMBATING TERRORISM TO DETERMINE OBJECTIVES AND END STATES FOR OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

In March, the new commander of the Army took charge and immediately ordered his commanders to find the enemy and maintain contact with him. During the first major engagement, the new commander's forces would sustain more than 17,000 casualties while the enemy would suffer fewer than 8,000. During the next engagement, he would order an assault, which would cost his army 12,000 men with very little gain; he would later consider the decision to be a mistake. Again in his third battle, the new commander's forces sustained more casualties than the enemy. Surprisingly, the new commander was winning the war, and although his tactics would change, his strategy would not.

The new commander was General Ulysses S. Grant and the year was 1864. General Grant recognized the Army of Northern Virginia, and its commander, General Robert E. Lee, to be the center of gravity for the South at that time. Victory for the North could happen only when Lee's army had been defeated and made to surrender. This strategy of maintaining constant pressure on Lee would, in the end, lead to the surrender of Lee's forces at Appomattox and the end of the American Civil War.<sup>1</sup>

One recognizes that in today's world, no President of the United States (U.S.) would be able to maintain the support of the American people with such a high casualty rate, but the anecdote illustrates the fact that a strategic success cannot necessarily be determined by a single battle or even a series of them. At this time, journalists and public officials are asking if we are winning the war in Iraq. The real question to be posed should be in determining how the battles in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) affect the War on Terror.

The current administration characterized OIF as a part of the War on Terror. In a September 7, 2003 address, President Bush stated, "Iraq is now the central front in the War on Terror. Enemies of freedom are making a desperate stand there, and there they must be defeated. . . We will do what is necessary, we will spend what is necessary, to achieve this essential victory in the War on Terror, to promote freedom and to make our own nation more secure."<sup>2</sup>

If Iraq is the "central front in the War on Terror" and if, as Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz purports, "The single greatest threat to peace and freedom in our time is terrorism,"<sup>3</sup> then one must judge American success in Iraq by how well OIF contributes to achieving the ultimate goal of victory in the War on Terror. Unfortunately, the debate in the government and especially inside the administration shows very little consistency between the



objectives put out by the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (NSCT) and those stated for OIF.

Statements by the President and high ranking officials in his administration lead one to believe that the only possible end state for OIF is a functioning democratic government. In fact, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated in an interview on November 11, 2003 that “the only exit strategy I know of is success. And success is defined as transferring sovereignty to the Iraqi people and transferring the capability, assuring the capability of the Iraqis to provide for their own security.”<sup>4</sup> Although possibly spoken for public consumption, this myopic view of success for OIF can be detrimental to the overall success of the War on Terror for two reasons.

First, it blinds the strategic planner to other viable exit strategies. During the Cold War, the U.S. had an overarching strategy to defeat Communism. The U.S. recognized that the institution would collapse on its own if the U.S. could just contain it long enough. Unfortunately, during the Cold War, Vietnam became the “central front” for combating Communism. U.S. strategists became so caught up in winning Vietnam, they ignored its affects on the war against Communism. The result was an exhausted and demoralized U.S., unable to muster the strength to continue the overall strategy. Ja’nos Radva’nyi, a Hungarian defector who was personally involved in the negotiations between Hanoi and Washington, characterized that post-Vietnam U.S. international policy “as paralyzed . . . unable to respond to the Soviet advances. . . (because) it (had) engulfed itself in nationwide masochism and mourned about a war which it won militarily but lost politically and diplomatically.”<sup>5</sup> While the U.S. was licking its wounds from Vietnam, the Soviets continued their expansion of Communism to include countries such as Laos, Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Afghanistan and Yemen. It was not until 1978, with the invasion of Afghanistan, that the U.S. could even begin to muster the strength to protest the aggression, let alone credibly counter the expansion. If Vietnam era strategic planners had seen the conflict in Vietnam in view of the total war on communism, they would have recognized that withdrawing earlier would have been more advantageous. However, the declared end state did not allow for other alternatives. The U.S. faces the same dilemma in Iraq. Although, the preferred end state for OIF would be a democratic and economically secure Iraq, U.S. strategy makers must not forget that the real war is against Global Terrorism and Iraq is, at most, only one of the battles in that war.

Second, a myopic view that a functioning democratic government is the only possible end state misses the complexity of dealing with all the issues involved. In order to combat terrorism the NSCT states that changes must happen to the international system to delegitimize terrorism and to deny future recruits. This objective cannot be dictated by the U.S. creating a top-down

leadership, but instead must recognize the inherent difficulties associated with changing the dynamics of any large group. Complexity theorists believe that the interactive dynamics in large systems are “too complex to be effectively controlled or determined by leaders.” As stated by Russ Marion and Mary Uhl-Bien in their article *Complexity v. Transformation: The New Leadership Revisited*, “Complex Leadership . . . rather than looking to influence systems directly, (they) need to foster the conditions that enable productive, but largely unspecified, future states.”<sup>6</sup> The road to an international system that rejects the caustic influence of terrorism is made up of complex interactions and forces. As in sailing, one does not know exactly the course one will sail, but by determining the end mark, one can correct for any force not pushing the ship towards the goal, while capitalizing on any advantage that assists along the way. In fact, one must often tack away to reach the overall goal. A myopic view of the end state in OIF, which does not consider the overall goals of the War on Terror, does not prepare the strategic planner to accept those types of course corrections required for ultimate success in the complex interactive system.

By carefully examining OIF in the context of the War on Terror, one can use the NSCT, which breaks down the War on Terror into four “fronts,” as the capstone document. Using that as a framework, one can determine which fronts are being fought in OIF, and can chart the objectives and end states for each front. Finally, by looking at the probable effects on each front if the U.S. were to pull out of Iraq without a functioning democratic government, one can demonstrate the disconnect of the public confessed exit strategy.

#### **FRONTS IN THE WAR ON TERROR**

To win the war on terror, we must hunt a scattered and resourceful enemy in dark corners around the world. We must break up their cells, shut off their sources of money. In the nations where resentment and terrorism have taken root, we must encourage the alternative of progress and tolerance and freedom that leads to peace.<sup>7</sup>

—President George W. Bush

The NSCT lays out four “fronts” or “goals” in the War on Terror; DEFEAT, DENY, DIMINISH and DEFEND. No single front can be viewed in isolation from the others, nor does any front’s objectives stand preeminent to the exclusion of another front’s objectives. It is also important to recognize that the tactics and ways one uses to meet one front’s objectives might interfere with a successful termination of another.

## DEFEAT

“But the best way to secure the homeland is to hunt the enemy down one at a time and bring them to justice, which is what America is going to do.”<sup>8</sup>

—President George W. Bush

The NSCT states “The United States and its partners will defeat terrorist organizations of global reach by attacking their sanctuaries; leadership; command, control, and communications; material support; and finances.”<sup>9</sup> In short, this front will take the battle to the terrorist, working to identify, locate and destroy terrorist leadership and its organizations. In so doing, the U.S. will disrupt and undermine the operations of terrorist groups who, because of their international funding and organization, are too large to be dealt with as criminals.<sup>10</sup> Although the argument rages as to whether or not leaders such as Osama Bin Ladin truly represent centers of gravity in the War on Terror, their departure from key positions undoubtedly would disrupt terrorist operations and provide a window of opportunity for the U.S. and its partners.

While all forms of national power (diplomatic, military, information and economic) will be used to prosecute the fight on this front, DEFEAT does most closely align itself to the use of military power.

## DENY

The gravest danger to freedom lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology. When the spread of chemical and biological and nuclear weapons, along with ballistic missile technology – when that occurs . . . small groups could attain a catastrophic power to strike great nations.<sup>11</sup>

—President George W. Bush

This front will “deny further sponsorship and sanctuary to terrorist by ensuring other states accept their responsibility to take action”<sup>12</sup>. . . It focuses on the responsibilities of all states to fulfill their obligations to combat terrorism both within their borders and internationally.”<sup>13</sup> It seeks to end state sponsorship of terrorism, to develop a cohesive international resolve to fight terrorism, and to persuade the reluctant and compel the unwilling. It also aims to “interdict and disrupt material support for terrorist,” including countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>14</sup>

All forms of national power may be used, but the most enduring effects in this front would probably best be accomplished by using diplomatic, economic and information elements of power. Military power is perhaps most appropriately relegated to supporting our weak but willing partner nations and compelling the unwilling states.

## DIMINISH

America believes that freedom and democracy are critical to defeating terror, because free nations that respect human rights do not breed hatred, resentment and ideologies of murder.<sup>15</sup>

—President George W. Bush

The U.S. cannot defeat today's global terrorist network simply by killing and capturing the terrorists themselves. Military victory will not provide the desired end state in the War on Terror. In Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's infamous leaked email, he posed the question, "Are we capturing, killing or deterring and dissuading more terrorists every day than the madrassas (sic) and the radical clerics are recruiting, training and deploying against us?"<sup>16</sup> Implicit in his question is the clear understanding that we must not only capture and kill, but also deter and dissuade. The last two methods are accomplished by attacking the means terrorist use to procure both recruits and material support.

The War on Terror is, in truth, a war of ideals. Terrorists use the problems in the world - poverty, deprivation, social disenfranchisement, and unresolved political and regional disputes - as enablers to develop their support base.<sup>17</sup> Extreme political groups, like terrorist groups, provide a people who feel they have no control of their lives a means to actively engage the perceived enemy. Jennifer L. Windsor, in her article "Promoting Democratization Can Combat Terrorism" states, "Over the long term, the establishment of democratic political systems in the Middle East has advantages that can mitigate the great possibilities for recruitment of extremists."<sup>18</sup> She then lists eight characteristics of democracies that deter terrorist support:

- Avenues for peaceful change of government.
- Channels for dissent and political discussion.
- Rule of law . . . specifically an independent judiciary.
- Civil society . . . (where) individuals feel they have meaningful opportunities to effect change in their own countries.
- Free flow of information.
- Strong states . . . legitimized by virtue of having been chosen by their own people.
- Sustainable economic and social development.
- Needed values and ideals . . . (like) tolerance, compromise, respect for individual rights, equality of opportunity, and equal status under the law."<sup>19</sup>

Democracy, or more correctly, representative government, provides a venue for change that does not require resorting to violence against the innocent. DIMINISH works to address those underlying conditions that terrorists seek to manipulate.<sup>20</sup>

DIMINISH will require the U.S. to support weak but willing states, who advocate democratic and inclusive economic policies. It will also require the support of all movements in the international community, which make clear that terrorism is an illegitimate form of aggression, and that the use of it is destructive to world order and caustic to societies who allow it to be perpetrated.<sup>21</sup>

Military power is sometimes necessary in the war of ideals, but it is the least effective of the four elements of national power and can often be counterproductive. Regime changes like those in Iraq and Afghanistan provide a window of opportunity, but if the regime is replaced by an equally inadequate form of government, or worse, no form of government, then DIMINISH will see no lasting gain in that specific country. Fredrick Kagan correctly stated, "If the most difficult task facing a state that desires to change the regime in another state is securing the support of the defeated populace for the new government, then the armed forces of that state must do more than break things and kill people."<sup>22</sup>

## DEFEND

We've taken unprecedented steps to protect this homeland . . . Yet wars are won on the offensive and America and our friends will stay on the offensive. We're hunting down the al Qaeda wherever they hide, whether it be from Pakistan or Iraq or the Philippines or the Horn of Africa. And we're making good progress.<sup>23</sup>

—President George W. Bush

While proactively engaging terrorism and its underlying causes, the U.S. must remain vigilant of the threat to the nation and its interests abroad. The NSCT states that some of its "tenets include the physical and cyber protection of the United States, its populace, property, and interests, as well as the protection of its democratic principles."<sup>24</sup> The newly formed Department of Homeland Security has taken the lead in organizing the national program to defend the U.S..

In the end, it is important to recognize that the four fronts of the NSCT are parallel rather than sequential. As a result, they have overlap in time, areas of interest and activity. OIF is one of those examples of overlapping interests. This assertion does not mean that each front has similar objectives or that a singular end state exists that meets the requirements of each. A study of each front's objectives and end states, as they apply to OIF, allows the strategic planner to manage contrasting and competing requirements in Iraq, and make decisions that will improve the overall prosecution of the War on Terror.

## **WAR ON TERROR'S OBJECTIVES AND END STATES IN OIF**

Objectives and end states are directly linked. The Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms (JP1-02) defines end state as "What the National Command Authorities want the situation to be when operations conclude."<sup>25</sup> Objectives are the goals, while the end state is a visionary view of how things will be when the objectives are met. Ultimately, a single end state could exist, which includes the successful accomplishment of all objectives. However, in dealing with the uncertainties of strategic planning, it is valuable to determine a successful end state for each objective, providing the planner with end states that comprise varying degrees of success and allowing realistic modeling of exit strategies. Using bowling as an analogy, the end state that comprises success of all objectives (all 10 frames) is a 300 point game; but success can also be realized when the player simply outscores his opponent.

OIF supports the objectives of only three of the four fronts: DEFEAT, DENY, DIMINISH. Understanding the individual objectives and possible end states allows the planner to determine the success or failure of OIF in support of the War on Terror.

### **DEFEAT.**

The NSCT lists three objectives in DEFEAT for the War on Terror - identify, locate and destroy terrorists and their organizations.<sup>26</sup> In OIF these national strategic objectives translate into two theater operational objectives - first, the permanent elimination of any international terrorist organizations inside the country; and second, the collection of intelligence from the former Iraqi regime and captured terrorists to further coalition efforts against terrorists groups outside of Iraq's borders.

With the exception of the Ansar al Islam group, which as Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz described as "basically a subsidiary of al Qaeda,"<sup>27</sup> international terrorist organizations do not appear to be using Iraq as a base of operation. When questioned at news conference regarding the make-up of the terrorist in Iraq, Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt of the Coalition Provisional Authority stated:

The only ideology that we can see is they somehow - - those that would attack the coalition forces are those that would have something to lose from free and democratic Iraq - - former Ba'athists who profited under Saddam, former Ba'athists who promoted under Saddam.<sup>28</sup>

Nonetheless, the country has become a magnet for minor terrorist operatives with possible ties to global terrorist groups. Therefore, the capture of an individual terrorist may lead to actionable intelligence, which would aid in the identification, location and defeat of an international terrorist

organization. The pursuit of such intelligence is echoed in remarks made 22 October, 2003 by Lieutenant General Sanchez, Commander Combined Joint Task Force Seven in Iraq:

We have arrested members of Ansar al-Islam; have definitive identification of that. AQ (al Qaeda), we know that there are organizations that have links back to al Qaeda, but we do not have any confirmed al Qaeda operatives actually in custody at this point. We do have some al Qaeda suspected-linked personnel that are in our custody, and we're still trying to work to establish the positive links to that organization.<sup>29</sup>

Therefore, the predominant end state in OIF that is related to DEFEAT is the dismantling of any global terrorist organizations inside the territorial boundaries of Iraq and the elimination or capture of their leaders. Organizations like Ansar al-Islam, with its ties with al Qaeda, must be disrupted and the leaders be captured or eliminated for a successful outcome.

## DENY

The NCST lists five objectives of DENY in the War on Terror; of these, only four translate into theater operational objectives in OIF.<sup>30</sup>

**End the state sponsorship of terrorism.** The U.S. successfully accomplished the objective and reached end state, because any sponsorship of terrorism conducted by the Hussein regime ended with the capture of Saddam Hussein.

**Eliminate terrorist sanctuaries and havens.** Early on in OIF, northeast Iraq was a haven for the al Qaeda-related organizations Ansar al-Islam with training bases like Salman Pak and the area around Biyare.<sup>31</sup> While fixed bases were easily hit and destroyed, the objective of DENY in OIF is to ensure that the territory of Iraq will not be a sanctuary for global terrorist groups. This objective requires complete control of the Iraqi territory, an objective that cannot be met by mere freedom of movement for friendly ground forces. Terrorists, by their very nature, blend in with the local populace. Successful denial of terrorist sanctuary requires both freedom of movement and the ability to collect actionable intelligence.

The U.S. is not capable, at this time, of denying Iraqi territory to terrorists, although it is capable of harassing and operating against them. While a successful end state cannot be achieved without a functioning government, it does not necessarily have to be free and democratic, but it must be able to control its own territory through effective use of actionable intelligence. Only the average Iraqi citizen can provide the much-needed intelligence. Mr. Bernard Kerik, the former New York City Chief of Police and senior policy advisor for four months to Ambassador Bremer, wrote "The coalition can't fight someone they can't see and they'll never deter those who are willing to, or more so want to, die. What we need is the ability to identify, locate and capture or kill the enemy that's trying to prevent freedom from growing in

Iraq - - and no one can do that better than the Iraqis themselves.”<sup>32</sup> Ahmad Chalabi, a member of the Iraqi Governing Council, stated “Only one force can defeat the Saddam Hussein network - the Iraqi people. . . It is only by involving the Iraqis as true partners that the United States will be able to salvage the situation. The Iraqi people must feel they have a stake in their governance; they must feel that they are in control of their own land.”<sup>33</sup> The most effective means of developing that type of perception and accountability from the Iraqi people is to develop a representative government.

**Interdict and disrupt material support for terrorists, including weapons of mass destruction.** One of the overriding reasons presented to the public for U.S. intervention in Iraq was to prevent the transfer of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction hardware or expertise to terrorists. Secretary Collin Powell clearly articulated the threat when he stated;

One year ago, when President Bush brought his concerns about Iraq to the United Nations, he made it plain that his principal concern in a post-Sept. 11 world was not just that a rogue regime such as Saddam Hussein’s had WMD programs, but that such horrific weapons could find their way out of Iraq into the arms of terrorists who would have even fewer compunctions about using them against innocent people across the globe.<sup>34</sup>

Whether weapons of mass destruction are eventually found or not, the scientists and technicians with the knowledge to create them do exist. The objective in OIF is to control both the weapons of mass destruction themselves and those who had worked on related research for the Saddam Hussein regime.

Obviously, any weapons of mass destruction must be collected and either removed or destroyed, but even if that were done the potential for the proliferation of knowledge related to weapons of mass destruction would remain. Iraqi scientists and technicians who worked in weapons of mass destruction research or production must be considered national assets and either their movements must be monitored or their allegiance to a U.S.-friendly Iraqi government assured. After WWII, the U. S. created an organization under the Manhattan Project called Alsos.<sup>35</sup> The mission was to collect all people, places and things associated with the Nazi atomic research and development, and to ensure the capability was not passed on to the Soviet Union. A similar mission is required in Iraq. A successful end state for this portion of DENY requires tight control of those with the knowledge and skill that terrorists require to develop or employ weapons of mass destruction of their own.

**Strengthen and sustain the international effort to fight terrorism; specifically, compelling Unwilling States.** Compelling the former Iraqi regime is complete, but the opportunity should not be lost to compel the Unwilling nations by implied threat. No longer



should supporters of terrorism feel that the only threat they face is sanctions or, at worst, surgical strikes like those carried out against Libya. Peter Brookes, a senior Fellow for National Security Affairs at the Heritage Foundation, wrote "Saddam's capture could persuade Syria and Iranian leaders that their support for terrorism, in the form of such rogues as Hamas, Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and al Qaeda, is a fool's errand and will likely resign their fate, as well, to the despot dustbin of history."<sup>36</sup>

Using the former Iraqi regime as an example will work only if perceptions pervade that the U.S. is neither restrained nor constrained in its use of force against terrorist and their sponsors.<sup>37</sup> There are two factors that regimes might perceive as preventing further similar U.S. military interventions – first, that the U.S. is militarily and politically over-stretched and unable to engage in another action, and second, the belief that the Bush Administration is limited by low public support.<sup>38</sup>

A successful end state for OIF in relation to DENY would be to depart Iraq at the opportune time before U.S. armed forces become exhausted and the American people become disillusioned and lose their commitment to the War on Terror, thus maintaining the perception that the U.S. is willing and ready to intercede in countries where terrorists are operating.

#### DIMINISH

The objective of DIMINISH is to address the underlying causes of terrorism. President Bush and his administration have often stated that OIF provides the opportunity to develop in the Arab world a functioning representative government with an economic system that provides opportunity for all its citizens. A vibrant democracy in the region could provide a catalyst for change throughout the Arab world that would reduce underlying problems and thereby reduce the radical voices that support terrorist organizations. This objective is achieved most efficiently if a truly representative government is elected in Iraq. However, Iraq is only the catalyst for change throughout the region and not the end state. If surrounding governments are affected positively by the debates over the form of the Iraqi government and make necessary political and economic changes in their own governments, then the objective is met. As Douglas Feith, the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy stated, "...our mission is to create the conditions in which the people of the Middle East and elsewhere in the Islamic world can cherish the humane aspirations of free people everywhere for liberty and an opportunity to use their talents to win a measure of prosperity for themselves and their families."<sup>39</sup>

In London recently, President Bush also echoed these thoughts,

And, as importantly, the removal of Saddam Hussein gives the Iraqis a chance to live in freedom, which is the ultimate - - freedom is the ultimate route to security.

I strongly believe that free nations are peaceful nations. Free nations are not terrorist havens, do not become terrorist havens. Free nations won't create conditions of strife and resentment that breeds anxiety and terror.

The goal is for Iraq to be peaceful and free. I understand the consequences of a free and peaceful Iraq in the midst of the Middle East. We can have the debate all day long as to whether the Middle East will ever adapt the habits of democracy and freedom. I think they will, obviously; and I'm confident they will.<sup>40</sup>

## DEFEND

Many have linked OIF with DEFEND. The vision of drawing terrorists to Iraq from other parts of the world, so as to locate, fix and destroy them is alluring. However, at best, this is a secondary or even tertiary result of DEFEAT. Additionally, it incorrectly presupposes that those drawn to Iraq are the same ones with the ability to reach American territory. More than likely, the actual terrorists operating in Iraq are homegrown and not a real threat to our citizens outside the immediate area around Iraq.

It is obvious, after determining the operational objectives in Iraq for each front in the War on Terror, that they are very different and do not necessarily point to a single, consolidated end state. To illustrate that fact, one should consider what effect an early withdrawal of U.S. forces would have on the objectives of the War on Terror. An early withdrawal would be defined as leaving Iraq before the declared end state of a functioning, democratic government is in place.

## EFFECT OF EARLY WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ

As the American people begin to perceive Iraq as a quagmire and their collective patience grows thin watching the steady loss of life, voices will grow louder to withdraw from Iraq. Already, those voices are being heard. A recent TIME article presented this argument this way.

One argument against the U.S. simply leaving Iraq is based on the notion that to do so would just encourage more terrorism. . . The converse, however, may also be true: That the continued presence other U.S. occupation forces in Iraq fuels an anti-American insurgency there and swells the ranks of Islamist terror networks worldwide.<sup>41</sup>

Again, the construct of the four fronts of the War on Terror provides a useful framework to consider the results of that policy.

## DEFEAT

As stated above, this does not rely on an end state of a functioning government. Destruction of terrorist organizations and the capture or elimination of their leaders is the objective. So long as that objective is achieved, the U.S. may depart at anytime.

## DENY

The applicable four main strategic objectives in DENY have different end states, so they will be effected differently by an early withdrawal.

**End the state sponsorship of terrorism.** Complete, with regime change. A follow on government is not required.

**Eliminate terrorist sanctuaries and havens.** Although this objective in the front does require a functioning government to be successful, it might not require one with democratic ideals. The end state requires two parts - a governing regime that is anti-terrorist and that has the support of the people to provide actionable intelligence against any organizations, which would attempt to use the territory. Both are extremely important. If Iraq is successful in creating a representative government, but the Iraqi people do not feel it is their own, intelligence will be sparse and Iraq will remain a potential operating ground for international terrorists. If a truly Iraqi representative government is established, but it is anti-American and not opposed to terrorist ideals, then a sanctuary is once again developed. Conversely, if a dictatorship should be organized with an anti-terrorism bias, and by whatever means is able to obtain actionable intelligence against all terrorist organization, it would meet the narrow requirements for this part of the front.

**Interdict and disrupt material support for terrorists, including weapons of mass destruction.** Control of the actual hardware and related knowledge is key to achieving this objective rather than a functioning government. If a successful Alsos-type program is implemented, and all the people with knowledge and skills are rounded up, along with all weapons of mass destruction material, then the end state would be met with or without a functioning government.

**Strengthen and sustain the international effort to fight terrorism, specifically, compelling Unwilling States.** With this strategic objective, the end state does not lie in Iraq, but on the perception of the other unwilling countries and the U.S. public. To deter the unwilling, they must be disabused of any misperceptions regarding U.S. willingness and capability to engage in another regime change. Leaving Iraq at the wrong time could be as disruptive to the War on Terror as leaving Vietnam was to the war against Communism. Obviously, it was not the loss of South Vietnam that caused the United States to fall into a period of self-imposed détente, but the loss of the will and commitment of the people.<sup>42</sup>

The formation of a functioning Iraqi government is not as important to this strategic objective, as is the manner in which the U.S. disengages from Iraq.

## **DIMINISH**

At first look, the objective of this front would appear to be the most likely casualty of an early withdraw from Iraq. However, Iraq is only to be a catalyst of change in the region. The U.S. does not want to have to go into every country in the region and perform a regime change in order to solve the underlying problems that supply a steady stream of recruits and other support for terrorism. Instead, the U.S. wants the example of Iraq to be a beacon to the region and to create a wave of change. While it is undeniable that a failed Iraqi regime would provide propaganda to other terrorists, just the debate in the Arab world could provide the catalyst for other countries to make changes. Jordan, probably one of the most liberal Middle East governments, but still a monarchy, has recently indicated that it would further move towards democratic reforms.<sup>43</sup>

Obviously, a successful Iraqi representative government with an inclusive economy is desirable, but other countries - not Iraq itself - are the focus of this front.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Strategic planners need to understand the complexity and discontinuity of the objectives of the War on Terror as they relate to Iraq. Shaping the strategic environment to defeat terrorism requires recognizing when operational objectives become counterproductive to the overall strategy. A functional, democratic government in Iraq would be an outstanding outcome in OIF, but if the patience of the American people becomes short, or if the U.S. loses completely the support of the Iraqi people, then the U.S. should depart Iraq. It must not allow itself to become side tracked from the War on Terror, which as Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz stated is "the single greatest threat to peace and freedom in our time."<sup>44</sup>

## **SUMMARY**

It is easy to miss seeing the forest for the trees. Myopically viewing the end state of OIF without considering it in light of the War on Terror is just as easy and equally incorrect. The NSCT provides an excellent framework by which to view OIF. Breaking the strategy into four specific fronts of DEFEAT, DENY, DIMINISH and DEFEND allows for a better understanding of operational objectives and helps decision makers recognize when satisfactory end states are achieved. A similar exercise should be executed for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, and for all future operations conducted in support of the War on Terror.

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## ENDNOTES

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<sup>2</sup> George W. Bush, "President Addresses the Nation," September 7, 2003; available online from <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/09/20030907-1.html>>; Internet; Accessed 13 December 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Wolfowitz, "Keeper of the Flame Award," October 9,, 2003; available online from <<http://www.dod.gov/speeches/2003/sp20031009-depsecdef0544.html>>; Internet; Accessed 13 December 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Donald Rumsfeld, "Secretary Rumsfeld Interview with Fox and Friends," November 11, 2003; available online from <<http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/tr20031111-secdef0868.html>>; Internet; Accessed 10 January 2003.

<sup>5</sup> J'anos Radv'anyi, "Vietnam War Diplomacy: Reflections of a Former Iron Curtain Official," *Assessing the Vietnam War*, ed. Lloyd J. Matthews and Dale E. Brown (Washington, Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers), 65.

<sup>6</sup> Russ Marion and Mary Uhl-Bien, "Complexity v. Transformation: The New Leadership Revisited," Presented at Managing the Complex IV - - Conference on Complex Systems and the Management of Organizations, Ft. Meyers, Florida, December 2002. Document available online from <[http://www.isce.edu/site/Uhl\\_Bien\\_Marion.pdf](http://www.isce.edu/site/Uhl_Bien_Marion.pdf)>. Internet: Accessed 2/3/04.

<sup>7</sup> George W. Bush, "President Discusses War on Terror in Thailand," October 19, 2003; available online from <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/10/20031019-4.html>>; Internet; Accessed 13 December 2003.

<sup>8</sup> George W. Bush, "President Bush Discusses Economy, Small Business from Alabama," November 3, 2003; available online from <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/20031103-7.html>>; Internet; Accessed 15 December 2003.

<sup>9</sup>George W. Bush, *The National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, (Washington, D.C.: The White House, February 2003), 11.

<sup>10</sup>ibid, 17

<sup>11</sup>George W. Bush, "President Bush Delivers Graduation Speech at West Point," June 1, 2002; available online from <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/print/20020601-3.html>>; Internet; Accessed 17 December 2003.

<sup>12</sup>NSCT, 11

<sup>13</sup>ibid, 17

<sup>14</sup>ibid, 21

<sup>15</sup> George W. Bush, "President Bush, Indonesian President Megawati Hold Joint Press Conference," November 3, 2003; available online from

<<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/20031103-7.html>; Internet; Accessed 15 December 2003

<sup>16</sup> Donald Rumsfeld, Memo, dated October 16, 2003; as reported in the USA TODAY article, *Rumsfeld's war-on-terror memo*; 10/22/2003.

<sup>17</sup>NSCT, 22

<sup>18</sup> Jennifer L. Windsor, "Promoting Democratization Can Combat Terrorism," *The Washington Quarterly* Summer 2003; 26:3, pp 46.

<sup>19</sup>ibid, 46, 47

<sup>20</sup>NSCT, 17

<sup>21</sup>NSCT, 24

<sup>22</sup>Fredrick W. Kagan, "War and Aftermath," *Policy and Review*, Hoover Institute, August/September 2003, No. 120

<sup>23</sup>George W. Bush, "President Calls on Senate to Pass American Dream Downpayment Act," October 15, 2003; available online from <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/10/20031015-10.html>; Internet; Accessed 15 December 2003

<sup>24</sup>NSCT, 24

<sup>25</sup> *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Publication 1-02 (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, April 2001), 145.

<sup>26</sup>NSCT, 16,17

<sup>27</sup>"Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz interviewed by Juan Williams," *United States Department of Defense, News Transcripts*, October 30, 2003; available online from <<http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2003/tr20031030-depsecdef0830.html>; Internet; Accessed 10 December 2003.

<sup>28</sup> "Coalition Provisional Authority Briefing, 17 November 2003," *United States Department of Defense, News Transcripts*, 19 November, 2003; available online from <<http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2003/tr20031117-0888.html>; Internet; Accessed 5 December 2003.

<sup>29</sup> "Combined Joint Task Force Seven Update," 22 October, 2003; available online from <[http://www.vcorps.army.mil/www/CJTF7/Transcripts/cjtf7\\_trans\\_031022a.htm](http://www.vcorps.army.mil/www/CJTF7/Transcripts/cjtf7_trans_031022a.htm); Internet; Accessed 10 December 2003.

<sup>30</sup>NSCT, 18-22

<sup>31</sup>"White House Fact Sheet, July 1, 2003," *Defend America News – Facing the Iraqi Threat*, available online from <<http://www.defendamerica.mil/terrorism/waronterror.html>; Internet; Accessed 17 December 2003.

<sup>32</sup>Bernard B. Kerik, "Baghdad City Cop," *The Wall Street Journal*, September 28, 2003; available online from <<http://www.opinionjournal.com/extra/?id=110004077>>; Internet; Accessed 18 December 2003.

<sup>33</sup>Ahmad Chalabi, "The View From Iraq," *The Washington Post*, August 31, 2003; available online from <<http://home.cogeco.ca/~konuche/1-9-03-opinion-chalabi-view-from-irq.html>>; Internet; Accessed 18 December, 2003.

<sup>34</sup>Collin Powell, "What Kay Found," OP-ED *The Washington Post* October 7, 2003; available online from <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/10/20031019-4.html>>; Internet; Accessed 15 December 2003.

<sup>35</sup>Tom Bower, *The Paperclip Conspiracy, The Battle for the Spoils and Secrets of Nazi Germany*, (London, Paladin Grafton Books, 1988). Also recommend; Boris T. Pash, *The Alsos Mission*, (New York, Award Books, 1970)

<sup>36</sup>Peter Brookes, "The Terror War Goes On," December 15, 2003; available online from <<http://www.heritage.org/Press/Commentary/ed121503a.cfm>>; Internet; Accessed 18 December 2003.

<sup>37</sup>For examples see Justin Webb, "Is Iran next after Iraq?" *BBC News*, May 29, 2003; available online from <[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/2948648.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2948648.stm)>; Internet; Accessed 17 December 2003. or "Syria Calls up Reserves, Fears US-Israeli Military Pincer" *DEBKAfile Special Intelligence Report*, October 14, 2003; available online from <<http://www.debka.com/article.php?aid=591>>; Internet; Accessed 17 December 2003.

<sup>38</sup>Washington Post foreign policy reporter Peter Slevin recently opined, "It is very difficult to imagine the (Bush) administration or the country having the stomach for another huge invasion and rebuilding project like Iraq, not least because whatever happens in 2004, the United States will have to be deeply involved in Iraq and Afghanistan for some time to come." Peter Slevin, Transcript "Foreign Policy," *Washington Post*, December 4, 2003; available online from <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A1002-2003Nov20.html>>.

<sup>39</sup>Douglas J. Feith, "Strategy and the Idea of Freedom," Heritage Lecture #OL1, November 24, 2003; available online from <[http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/HLOnline\\_feith.cfm](http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/HLOnline_feith.cfm)>; Internet; Accessed 18 December 2003.

<sup>40</sup>George Bush, "Goal in Iraq is Peace and Freedom, Bush Tells UK's Sun Newspaper," 18 November 2003; available online from <<http://telaviv.usembassy.gov/publish/press/2003/november/111902.html>>; Internet; Accessed 4 December 2003.

<sup>41</sup>Tony Karon, "Building an Iraq Exit Strategy," *Time*, 5 November, 2003; available online from <<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,537458,00.html>>; Internet; Accessed 13 February 2004.

<sup>42</sup>Radv'anyi, 65.

<sup>43</sup>Rym Brahimi, "Jordan King urges more democracy," *CNN*, December 1, 2003; available online from <<http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/12/01/jordan.democracy/>>; Internet; Accessed 5 December 2003.



<sup>44</sup> Paul Wolfowitz, "Keeper of the Flame Award," October 9,, 2003; available online from <<http://www.dod.gov/speeches/2003/sp20031009-depsecdef0544.html>>; Internet; Accessed 13 December 2003.

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